

A N N U A L R E P O R T
of the
M E D I C A L O F F I C E R O F H E A L T H
for the
U R B A N D I S T R I C T O F B U C K F A S T L E I G H
for the year 1948.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report as Medical Officer for the year 1948.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area:- 1365 acres.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population at the end of 1948:- 2570.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1948):- 880.

Rateable Value:- £13495.

Sum represented by penny rate:- £54.

The industries and social conditions remain unchanged in the main.

The war-time British Restaurant was taken over by the Council and is now the Civic Restaurant in new and more suitable premises.

Vital Statistics for the year 1948.

Live Births	(Total 38)	M.	F.
		20	18
Legitimate		19	18
Illegitimate		1	0
Still Births	Total	3	0
Legitimate		3	0
Deaths of infants under one year of age	Total	0.	

Birth-rate per 1000 Civilian population:-

Live Births	13.61
Still Births	1.16

Deaths	Total 40.	M.	F.
		22	18.

Death-rate per 1000 Civilian population 15.56.

Comparative Rates for England and Wales during 1948.

Birth Rate	Live Births	17.9
	Still Births	.42
Death Rate		10.8

Causes of Death.

Diseases of Heart	10
Cerebral Haemorrhage	7
Cancer	7
Arterio-Sclerosis	2
Bronchitis	2
Pneumonia	2
Peptic Ulcer	2
Nephritis	1
Anterior Poliomyelitis	1
Others (Senile decay)	6

Thirteen of the deaths recorded took place in Hospitals or Institutions.

The average age of the 27 who died within the Urban District was 72. The youngest being 43 and the oldest 94.

The general health of the Urban District was good. Twelve cases of whooping cough were notified and two cases of Anterior Poliomyelitis, one of which was unfortunately fatal.

Diphtheria Immunisation is carried out at the welfare centre, at the schools and by the local practitioners. I am happy to report that parents have always been most co-operative and it is improbable that there are many children now unprotected.

It is possible that one or two may have escaped, but it is certain that every child born here now is immunised before it reaches the age of one year, either at the welfare centre or by the local practitioners.

Housing.

Housing on the Globelands estate has progressed. 14 of the 30 traditional type houses were occupied and the remaining 16 were nearly ready.

Good progress was made with the 40 Cornish Unit houses on the same estate and some will be ready for occupation early in 1949.

Private building has continued up to the limit allowed by the Ministry of Health.

It is interesting to note that the Council now owns 20% of the occupied houses within the Urban District.

In my opinion any further extension of the housing programme should be directed towards providing small houses of the bungalow type for old couples.

Drainage and Sewerage.

During the year progress has been made in the preparation of the plans for remodelling the sewerage disposal works and it is hoped that it may be possible to send plans and estimates to the Ministry during the coming year.

I regard this as a matter of urgency, the present works being totally inadequate to deal with the amount of trade effluent and it is becoming increasingly difficult to avoid pollution of the River Dart.

Hitherto this has been accomplished save on rare occasions but the settling tanks and filters are hopelessly insufficient and the irrigation meadows are becoming sewage-clogged.

The margin is perilously small.

Water Supply.

The water supply is sufficient in quantity and good in quality. It is collected by land pipes laid in a moorland moss which flow into a collecting chamber at the source, from which it is led by iron pipes to a closed reservoir.

Arrangements are proceeding to augment the supply during 1949 by piping another spring to the collecting chamber.

All the houses except a few outlying farms and cottages now have a piped supply and the distribution is good throughout the whole district.

The liming plant installed at the reservoir has satisfactorily dealt with the natural plumbic solvency of the water and repeated analyses prove that the water delivered to the consumers is free from any contamination.

The provision of a new chlorination plant is under consideration.

Meat and Other Foods.

There are now no slaughter houses in the district and no action has been necessary.

In conclusion I have to thank the Chairman and the Members of the Council for their continued encouragement and support.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Sgd.) SYDNEY R. WILLIAMS.

